Bay Area Atari Users Group

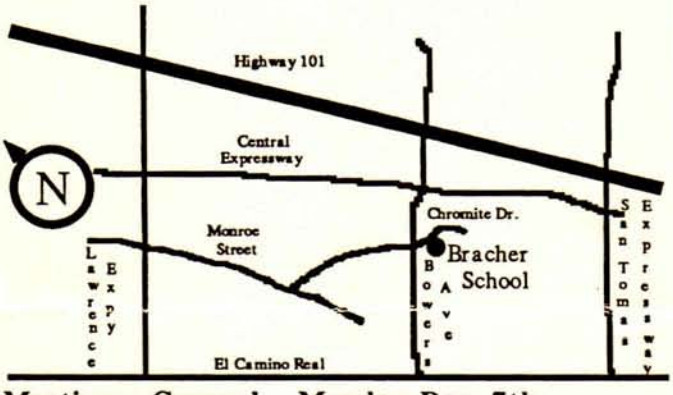
$2.00 USA

NEWSLETTER

December 1987

ATTENTION !

Meeting Location



Meetings: General - Monday Dec. 7th
ST Sig - Tuesday Dec. 8th
Bracher School Cafeteria
Corner of BOWERS & CHROMITE
SANTA CLARA, CA

Atari 8-bit SIG - Tuesday Dec. 15th.
Hewlett-Packard - Oak Room
Pruneridge Ave. - Cupertino

All meetings start at 7:00 PM

B.A.A.U.G. Roster of Officers:

President:
Mike R. Burnham (408) 247-0989
Vice-President:
Greg Kranich (408) 358-1520
Secretary:
Doug Thompson (415) 961-0353
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Software Librarians:
8-Bit: Bill Richerson (408) 446-2242
ST: Bruce Coleman (408) 288-7376
Document Librarian:
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Program Chairman:
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Member-at-Large:
Sue Tempey (415) 967-7629
Past President:
Frank Nagle (408) 720-8131

Baaug was founded by
John Crane & Clyde Spencer

Inside This Issue:

Knarf's Korner

Dateline: Sunnyvale, CA....

Welcome one more time to this korner of the world. During the past year I've tried to give you as much information as possible on new and old programs for the ST and the 800. Both Joe Fischer and I have also tried to improve on the quality of the newsletter with the use of **Publishing Partner** in conjunction with the master copy being printed out on a Laser Printer. We have had help from **Dan Birney** with a new font which looks a lot better, and has fewer problems with spacing characters on the printed page. We've had help from **B & C Computervision** in our use of their Laser Printer. We've had help from **Compuserve** and **Genie** in the form of downloaded articles. We've had help from **MaryLou White** with her execllent graphic work on our logo. And we've had help from **some** of our members in the way of articles which we have included in the newsletter.

In closing out this year as the co-editor's, we'd like to say **THANK YOU** to all who have given us the support and assistance we needed in order to do the job. With the elections in December, I'd be happy to pass on the masters for the newsletter to whomever assumes the role of **Editor** and/or **Co-editor**. Both Joe and I will continue to supply articles, and you can be assured of support from some of our more vocal members.

With the coming of the holiday season, you may all be looking at what new items to acquire for your favorite hobby. Let me go through just a few that I have used over the past year, and maybe give you a few ideas for items under your tree.

No list would be complete without **Publishing Partner**!! Without it, the newsletter would still be in the stage of Neanderthal man. With it, we have started to move into a new era of Desktop Publishing on the Atari ST. If anyone is in anyway interested in publishing, newsletters - cards - graphics - this is the current package of choice. An ideal gift beneath anyone's tree.

Along with the publishing package, you need a good graphics tool to create and edit the pictures to be used. Nothing could be finer than **D.E.G.A.S. Elite**. This package allows you to be your creative self. It also allows you to see how creative others can be since a great deal of ST art is in this format. It is used almost exclusively for the artwork that is featured in the pages of the B.A.A.U.G. newsletter.

For keeping track of your multiple disks, mailing lists, inventory, etc. there are two packages which I have used and like equally well. They are **Zoomracks II**, and **DatamanagerST**. Both are easy to use and provide quick access to the data that you have a need to store and retrieve. Of course **Zoomracks** has a few features not found in other packages, and lends itself to more applications than normal databases, it probably should be the one considered first. I have used it for keeping notes, mailing lists, user group lists, inventory and much more.

In the realm of word processing, the old faithful **ST Writer** still is used by me. This upgraded Public Domain package has most of features needed for letter writing and short articles. Of course it is not fully GEM based, but it does accomplish a lot for the price! The other package which supplies quite a bit is **1st Word**. Although not an authors complete writing tool, it has provided me with all the word processing power I have needed over the past few years time. Originally free, it is now a Commercial package from Atari (U.S.) Corp.

What about hardware? Well, if you are only using a single-sided drive, why not upgrade to a two drive system and make the second drive a double-sided one. Besides the added storage, the convienience of two drives is hard to beat. Or better still, you can invest in one of the many Hard Drives available for the ST. In this area I have no recommendations although the following is in order. If you want to just buy a hard drive and plug it in then go with a finished package. If you are willing to experiment and take the time to test a more esoteric design, then go with one of the disk interfaces which allow just about any hard disk to be interfaced. The choice is yours, but if you experiment, PLEASE BE CAREFUL.

The new **SX212** modem is now shipping from Atari and is available at most local dealers. This 300/1200 baud modem will open the world to telecommunications. But be CAREFUL, your phone bill may be more than you expected!!

I hope that some of the items I've mentioned find their way under your tree this Holiday Season.

In closing out the year, let me wish you and yours Happy Holidays. May all of you remain safe during the coming month, and return full of new resolve in the New Year.

Until NEXT YEAR .....

****** HAPPY ATARIING ******

ATARI®

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Editor's Note: The first group of articles relates to earlier announcements by Atari, followed by the latest announcements from the Fall Comdex.

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Atari Announces New Products at CES

Las Vegas, NV, Jan. 8 -- In a dramatic press conference held this morning at the Consumer Electronics Show, spokesmen for the Atari Corporation introduced a panoply of new products for 1987. Highlights included three significant new additions to Atari's flagship ST line of high-performance personal computers, a revolutionary low-cost laser printer, and an IBM PC-compatible personal computer of radically new design.

The new ST computers, dubbed "Mega STs 1, 2, and 4" incorporate one, two, and four megabytes of RAM, respectively. Encased in a newly-designed system unit with integral 800K microfloppy drive and detachable, ergonomic keyboard, the new machines are visibly different from Atari's current 520ST and 1040ST models, while remaining 100% compatible with them. Additional enhancements to the Mega machines include a battery-backed realtime clock, internal mounting space for an additional circuit board, and full external routing of the 68000 bus, making their architecture "wide open" for further enhancements. "We took all our customer's suggestions on how we could improve the ST, and incorporated them in this series," said Neil Harris, Atari's Director of Marketing Communications. Delivery of the new machines, via computer specialty stores, is expected to begin shortly at a price-point of "about $1000."

The new Atari laser printer, shown in a prototype version, will match or exceed the performance of present laser printer systems while costing only about half as much -- about $1500.

Atari has accomplished this enormous cost-saving by exploiting the power inherent in their ST computers. Coupled with a 2- or 4-megabyte Mega ST, the laser printer will form the output stage of a desktop publishing system costing less than $3000 total.

Atari's new IBM PC-compatible machine, the Atari PC, is a radical departure from present "PC clone" designs, offering top-of-the-line compatibility and features at a record-breaking price of under $500. Housed in a system unit similar to the Mega ST with integral 5-1/4" floppy drive and detachable XT-style keyboard, the PC/XT compatible Atari PC sports 512K RAM standard (expandable to 640K on the motherboard), an additional 256K of graphics-dedicated RAM, a custom graphics chip providing enhanced EGA, CGA, IBM Monochrome, and Hercules graphics capabilities, and a Microsoft compatible mouse. It operates at the IBM standard 4.77 Mhz or at a high-speed 8 Mhz "turbo mode," and provides for the addition of an 8087 math coprocessor at either speed. A monochrome monitor designed for use with the Atari PC was also announced. Costing under $200, the monitor supports all Atari PC graphics modes, including the high-resolution, multicolor EGA mode in grey-scale. Shipments of the Atari PC will begin in March.

The new products -- perceived by some as the fulfilment of promises made over a year ago by Atari CEO Jack Tramiel -- are universally hailed as milestones for the Atari Corporation. One informed onlooker commented: "It's as if Atari, in one fell swoop, had stepped to the leading edge in three markets: high-performance workstations, desktop publishing systems, and the lucrative PC-compatible game. They're going to be the company to watch in 1987."

With somewhat less fanfare, Atari also announced a new slimline 20-megabyte Winchester drive for its ST line, incorporating an extra port for daisy-chaining with other DMA-compatible peripherals, such as the new laser printer. At the same time, Atari announced price reductions on existing ST models. A 520ST CPU will now be available for under $300 retail, a 1040ST with monochrome monitor for around $799, and a 1040ST with color monitor for around $999.

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Reminder:

DECEMBER MEETING:

ELECTIONS and SWAP MEET

MEETING DATE:

MONDAY - DECEMBER 7th

7:00 PM

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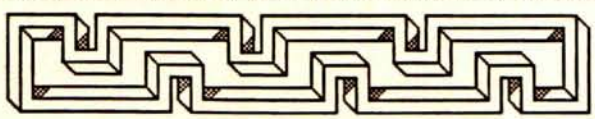
Low-cost Atari Laser Printer Promises "Revolution" in Desktop Publishing

Las Vegas, NV Jan. 8 -- A prototype laser printer, being demonstrated by Atari here at CES, will form the basis for a full-featured desktop publishing system costing less than half the price of systems built around competing architectures. Designed to interface with Atari's ST line of high-performance personal computers, the new laser printer will be taken to market later this year at the astoundingly low price of around $1500.

"Desktop publishing" -- the use of personal computers to produce high-quality printed matter -- has become a burgeoning industry over the past two years. Powerful, graphics-oriented personal computers such as the Atari ST are now routinely used in typesetting, page design, paste-up, and -- in combination with high-resolution laser printers -- for producing high-quality, "camera ready" output. However, largely because the price of laser printers has remained high, the cost of a desktop publishing system is still out of reach for many.

By redesigning the standard laser printer to take advantage of the power latent in the ST line -- particularly the new Mega STs -- Atari hopes to make full-featured desktop publishing a reality at less than $3000 for a complete system; about what a conventional laser printer costs today. Designed to interface with the ST's high-speed DMA (Direct Memory Access) port and incorporating a standard laser "engine," the Atari laser printer will produce rapid throughput at 300 dots-per-inch resolution. Though technical details have not yet been revealed, Shiraz Shivji, head of Atari's hardware engineering division, states that Atari "has designed an admirably flexible system that includes all the advantages and few of the disadvantages of present laser printer architectures. The printer will be able to handle multiple fonts and standard page-description languages at the discretion of software. Moreover, adapting present software to use the laser printer's full capabilities should be fairly simple, providing such software has been written in conformance with GEM standards."



The Atari PC -- "More than just another pretty clone."

Las Vegas, NV Jan. 8 -- The audience at this morning's CES press conference was stunned to learn that Atari Corporation, long a manufacturer of proprietary, high-performance home and personal computers, is planning to market an IBM PC-compatible machine. Industry insiders, however, were quick to note that Atari has always been known for bringing state-of-the-art products to market at low prices and for driving the industry by finding and staking out new turf. In this context, it is less surprising that Atari has chosen to bring their special brand of competition where, for the moment, the competition is hottest. "We saw no reason to ignore the fact that there are profits to be made in the IBM PC-compatible marketplace at this time." Says Neil Harris, Atari's Director of Marketing Communications, "especially since it is a different market than the one we are addressing with our high-end, flagship ST systems."

Presently, the PC-compatible industry is moving in two directions. At the low end, a group of more-or-less anonymous clone makers are packaging "bare bones" systems for the mail-order market. Buyers of such machines often find that they must add several hundred dollars worth of extra hardware before their "bargain systems" can accomplish useful work. At the high end, clone makers such as Leading Edge and Compaq are providing more complete systems than IBM itself. At prices starting at around $1200 and up, however, these machines can only be considered bargains in comparison with the even higher cost of going with Big Blue.

In designing their PC, Atari management decided to run counter to both dominant trends. Instead, they reasoned that by applying new technology and old-fashioned manufacturing leverage, they could bring to market a fully-loaded, state-of-the-art system -- a "here's everything you'll ever need" PC -- at a price-point low enough to undercut even the "el cheapo" clone makers.

They appear to have succeeded. The Atari PC, which will retail for "around $500," is a compact and elegant system loaded with features not found on systems costing literally thousands of dollars more. Measuring about 22" square by only 2" high, the Atari PC system unit includes a built-in, half-height 5-1/4" diskette drive and integral power supply. An XT-style keyboard attaches to the unit via a coiled cable. A second 5-1/4" drive or ST-style 3-1/2" drive, capable of reading disks in either ST or IBM format, can be attached externally. But that's just the beginning.

The Atari PC comes with 512K of RAM, expandable to 640K via sockets on the motherboard. Standard serial, parallel, and combination video ports, and an ST-style

disk port, are all included. A mouse port, based on the Microsoft INPORT chip, is built in, and an ST-type mouse is included with the system. Thus, unlike competing PC-compatible systems, the Atari PC will be able to run PC GEM, Microsoft Windows, and mouse-based programs like Microsoft Word, right out of the box.

The Atari PC employs an Intel 8086 microprocessor which can run at 4.77 Mhz and in an enhanced, 8 Mhz, "turbo mode." An 8087 math coprocessor, running at either speed, can be added via a socket on the motherboard.

As one would expect, Atari has paid special attention the Atari PC's graphics capabilities. Most low-cost PC compatibles support only the IBM Monochrome mode, and are thus text-only systems. A few of the more expensive clones include IBM Color Graphics Adapter (CGA) and/or Hercules monochrome graphics capabilities. IBM Enhanced Graphics Adapter (EGA) 640 x 350 x 16-color graphics capabilities have, in the past, only been accessible via expensive upgrades to a system's display circuitry and the purchase of costly high-resolution monitors. Moreover, purchasers of the supposedly downward-compatible EGA enhancements have often been disappointed to discover that IBM-style EGA isn't as downward compatible as they hoped -- some CGA software won't run.

Yet, Atari has managed to shoehorn IBM Monochrome, CGA, EGA, and Hercules graphics capabilities into the Atari PC. Besides the fact that the Atari PC is the only PC-compatible to include EGA graphics as a standard feature, Atari's Shiraz Shivji notes: "our EGA is completely downward-compatible with CGA. As a result, users will experience no compatibility problems when using the lower graphics modes." What's more, Atari has announced a $200 monochrome greenscreen monitor for use with the Atari PC that can display all its graphics modes; including the high resolution EGA color mode, using intensity gradients (gray scales) to represent colors. This is the first monitor that incorporates these capabilities. "The monitor is intelligent," says Shivji, "and recognizes the frequency of signals coming from the combination video port, adjusting itself appropriately to display whatever kind of text or graphics the machine produces."

The Atari PC is virtually 100% compatible with software available for the IBM PC and XT. While its slimline housing provides no room for mounting internal circuit cards, it is doubtful that more than a handful of users will require more capabilities than the machine provides in its off-the-shelf configuration. For those who do, Atari intends to provide an external expansion box in the near future.

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Flagships of the Atari Line: New Mega ST Workstations Offer "Power Without the Price" for Desktop Publishing, Professional Applications.

Las Vegas, NV Jan. 8 -- Atari's new Mega ST 1, 2, and 4 computers, announced today at the Consumer Electronics Show, create new personal computer price/performance standards -- standards that the rest of the computer industry will be hard-pressed to meet or beat in 1987. Available starting at $1000, the new machines will offer up to four megabytes of RAM memory: sixteen times that of most standard, high-end workstations.

The Mega ST is housed in an independent "system unit," about 22" square by 2" high, containing the CPU, a double-sided floppy drive and an internal power supply. The ST's normal complement of ports, including those for DMA, RS-232 serial, parallel, disk, video, cartridge, MIDI, mouse, and joystick, plus an additional port for connecting the detachable, ergonomic keyboard, are included. The Mega ST system unit is reinforced to support a monitor and can be stacked with other components -- notably the enhanced 20-megabyte hard disk drive. Even fully loaded, it will take up far less room than present ST configurations.

The sleek new Mega chassis contains a redesigned ST motherboard, sporting significant enhancements. A battery-backed clock calendar is now standard equipment, eliminating the present need to set time manually on power-up. The clock runs off alkaline penlight batteries -- more easily obtainable and less expensive than "coin-type" lithium cells.

The Mega ST architecture is "wide open," permitting internal and external expansion with add-on circuit cards. The new design provides full access to the 68000 bus and power supply, and fixtures have been provided for installing a circuit board inside the case. Further expansion is possible by routing the bus outside to an external card-cage. RAM expansion up to 16 megabytes and networking capabilities will soon be available from Atari as low-cost add-ons.

The Mega ST's detachable keyboard is designed to the highest ergonomic standards for convenience and ease of use. Connected to the system unit by a coiled cable, the new keyboard can be held comfortably in the lap. When placed on the desktop, adjustable legs fold down to support the unit at the preferred typing angle. Internally, the keyboard has been enhanced with high-quality key switches for improved tactile and auditory feedback, better "feel," and increased reliability.

Where does the Mega line stand in relation to other Atari products? "They're our flagships," says Atari spokesman Neil Harris. "The Mega STs represent Atari's continued strong support of the ST architecture." They are also physical proof that Atari has been listening to its users and taking their advice seriously. "Most of the improvements we've made in the basic ST design have been taken from 'wish lists' that have come out of our dialogue with users over the past year." Harris says.

With vastly expanded memory, an open architecture, a more compact configuration with integrated peripherals, and an improved keyboard, the Mega machines are clearly intended as "professional" computers. Networking capabilities and sufficient memory for running multiple, co-resident applications, plus the promise of desktop publishing (in combination with the upcoming Atari laser printer) are sure to make the Mega ST an office favorite in the coming year.

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NEWS FROM ATARI:

The Mega ST and the SX212 modem are at the last step before arriving. We have received pre-production samples. These are the first units off the line with all the same components, packaging, and production techniques as the real thing. We get a small number of these to test and make sure there are no last-minute glitches. When we give the go ahead, the next step is real production.

The Atari PC is looking likely for later this Summer. The XEP-80 (for the 8-bits) is waiting on one part which turned out to have an incredibly long lead time on orders -- once we have the part we'll turn these around ASAP. The SLM804 Laser Printer is waiting on one final component also, as well as the final version of the software drivers that support it.

New software from Atari includes the first titles in the Arrakis Advantage series of middle-school-level educational programs. There will be 17 in total, of which 4 have hit the stores already and the rest are in various stages of finalization.

Shortly after the SX212 modem hits, we will release an add-on package for 8-bit owners which is to contain an SIO cable and the program SX EXPRESS by Keith Ledbetter, as well as the new handler file. Of course, SX212 owners with the 8-bits can also use it through the 850 interface using existing terminal programs set up for Hayes-compatible modems.

The blitter chip is working and is in the pre-production Mega ST's mentioned above. The AMY chip is still in development, and may still see the light of day -- some day. AMY is a stubborn beast.

Speaking of stubborn, Microsoft Write is also still in development. Nearly finished now, too, although a few small bugs remain to be expunged.

SHOW NEWS: Atari made history by becoming the first computer manufacturer to exhibit at NAMM, the National Association of Music Merchants show in Chicago.

The ST was present throughout the show in virtually every booth where there were MIDI instruments. Atari sales people at the show were besieged by music dealers eager to sign up as Atari dealers. By the time this 4-day event was over, there were literally hundreds of dealer applications waiting to be approved. Before NAMM, Atari had 50 music stores as dealers --it looks like there will be 250 when the new dealers are selected.

In other news from NAMM, Keyboard magazine announced the results of its latest reader survey. The Atari ST computer has rocketed into the #1 slot in the vital "Intent-to-buy" category ahead of perennial leader Macintosh! The word in Atari HQ is "Today MIDI -- tomorrow, Desktop Publishing!"

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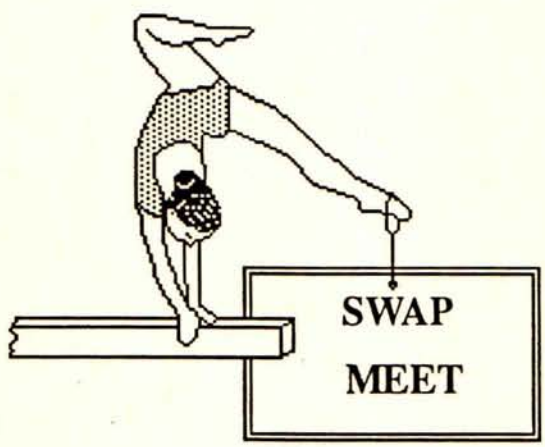

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONNECTIVITY, SOLUTIONS, AND TECHNOLOGY: ATARI ANNOUNCES NEW PRODUCTS AT COMDEX

(Las Vegas, NV -- Comdex Fall 87)... In a series of major product introductions, Atari Corporation emerges as a maker of a varied line of high-performance, low-cost solutions for the business world.

New technology is showcased by Abaq, an ultra-high-performance workstation with blazing speed and dazzling graphics. The Abaq, based on a sophisticated "transputer" chip, runs more than 10 times faster than a PC/AT technology and more than 5 times faster than the 68020 with math processor. The parallel processing capability of Abaq lets a single system multiply its processing power by adding extra transputer chips.

Atari unveiled its new CD player capable of reading CD-ROM disks and of playing musical CD disks. The CD-ROM is supported by a Mega and ST- compatible DMA interface, and will retail in early 1988 for under $600.

Atari's connectivity answer is "PromiseLAN". This system is compatible with the NETBIOS standard used by IBM and Novell. It communicates data at 1 megabits-per-second to PC's and over 250K bits-per-second over Appletalk. Atari is planning to manufacture "PromiseLAN" adapters for the Mega, ST, and PC computer lines.

The Atari Mega computers are showcased with a variety of solid business solutions. Desktop publishing is represented by both the Atari SLM804 Laser Printer and by G.O. Graphics, who are porting their Deskset program (CompuGraphics compatible) which Atari will market. Word Perfect is displaying the recently shipped Word Perfect ST and Atari is displaying Microsoft Write. A group of vendors are appealing to VARs with vertical packages running under the IDRIS multi-user multi-tasking operating system. Several new high-end CAD packages are on display including Foresight's Drafix 1.

Atari expanded its PC-compatible offerings by adding two new models, the PC2 (PC XT compatible) and PC4 (PC AT compatible), both with EGA graphics, high clock speeds, and low price tags. A variation of the PC3 will operate in VGA graphics mode as well. The PC2 and PC4 will be offered with 3.5" or 5.25" floppy disks and with hard disks. These new models join the PC1, which at $799 is a basic 512K PC XT compatible, suitable for use as a LAN workstation and for standalone personal computing. The PC2 includes XT-compatible slots, while the PC4's slots are PC AT compatible.

"We offer complete systems for the office," said Atari president Sam Tramiel. "I can see Atari Mega computers with laser printers as desktop publishing stations exchanging data with a satellite group of PC1's as LAN stations. An entire office environment can be created. The PC, the Macintosh, and the Atari computers co-exist. Each can do the things they do best."

Atari Corporation is a leading, vertically integrated manufacturer and marketer of personal computers and video games. The company offers the 16/32-bit ST and Mega personal computers; the 8-bit XE line of personal computers; the Atari PC; the 2600, 7800, and XE video game system; and a broad line of peripherals and software.

Atari Corporation is located at 1196 Borregas Avenue, Sunnyvale, CA 94086. Telephone (408) 745-2000.

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Editor's Note: The following were contributed by John Schreier for this mont's newsletter. John downloaded the information from the on-line service. Thank you John for your support.

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PRESS RELEASE: OVERVIEW OF COMDEX 1987 ATARI BOOTH

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First uploaded to GEnie 10/2/87

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ATARI MEANS BUSINESS A REPORT FROM THE 1988 COMDEX

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By Anita Malnig, START Editor

Las Vegas, November 2, 1987 --

Atari intends to give the likes of Sun Microsystems and Apollo Computers a run for the money with

Abaq (the root word for abacus), the new transputer-based workstation that the company is showing here.

By using RISC (Reduced Instruction Set Computer) architecture, the workstation will operate at 10 MIPS (million instructions per second). The latest graphics hardware and the IMS T-800 -- the Inmos Company's 32-bit microprocessor -- combine to form affordable, powerful personal workstations. A single transputer can deliver over ten times the power of an IBM PC AT. However, there's even greater strength in numbers. You can connect **two, 10, 100 or even MORE** transputers to create a relatively low-cost computer workstation with the power of a supercomputer. (Talk is that the price will be in the $5000 range.) When attached to a transputer, the ST or Mega acts as the input/output device for the system. Transputers can be linked via a built-in high-speed serial port to form a multiproces- sor array or a local area network.

Helios, the Unix-like operating system, was developed by the Perihelion Company in Great Britain, as was the transputer board itself. The Helios operating system encourages the use of many small programs which work together to create a final product.

Shiraz Shivji, Atari's vice president of research and development, expects that the transputer will be used primarily in engineering and science applications. Included with Abaq will be a very high resolution monitor, capable of four graphics modes: 1280 X960 in 16 colors or monochrome; 1024 X768 in 256 colors; 640 X480 in 256 colors with two screens; and 512 X480 in 16 million colors plus overlay. No firm delivery date is set, but late 1988 seems to be the most talked-about time frame. From a first-hand view, the crisp, vibrant graphics (such as four separate pictures running simultaneously) were drawing crushing crowds.

CD-ROM FOR ATARI

The exciting CD-ROM player introduced at Comdex can read up to 540 megabytes of data or play music. It connects to Atari's ST and Mega computers through the DMA (direct memory access) channel, a communications port that transmits data at up to 10 million bits per second. At 540Mb, the player can store more data than 1,000 floppy disks or 200,000 printed pages.

Demonstrated at the show is an English and French visual dictionary from Facts on File. It is categorized by topics such as transportation and food: click on the transportation theme and choose from an array of topics such as ferrys, container ships, airport terminals and so on -- all items illustrated. Speech output identifies each image in French and English. Grolier's Encyclopedia also runs on this CD-ROM, as do audio CDs. Atari has a task force at work now developing more products for this player, which will be available at computer specialty dealers and retail outlets in February, 1988, at a suggested retail price of $599.

DO ATARI DESKTOP PUBLISHING

G.O. Graphics, in conjunction with Atari, will bring to market a sophisticated desktop publishing program called Deskset. This works as a front end to the CompuGraphics typesetting equipment, offering the use of 1,800 fonts. This is not just a desktop publishing program for four-page newsletters and the like: it could design entire publications such as Antic and START. It will output to such laser printers as the striking Atari laser printer, also being demonstrated with Deskset. (Look for the next Comdex installment for additional desktop publishing programs for the ST.) Deskset, which works only on a Mega, will work within the GEM environment and offers all the standard features of the most sophisticated desktop publishing programs -- features such as character compensation, kerning, columns, boxes, rules and the ability to merge text and graphics. Look for this product mid- to late 1988.

AND. . . ATARI PCS

The Atari PC1, introduced earlier this year, can be used as a local area network workstation or as a standalone personal computer. It runs at a top speed of 8 Mhz, with a software switch to set the clock speed to 4.77 when needed. The PC1 works with any CGA, MDA, EGA or multi-frequency monitor. Maximum color screen resolution is 640 X350. The PC1 has a 64-color palette, with a maximum of 16 on the screen at a time. It is expected to retail at $800.

New to the Atari PC family is the PC2, a dual-speed XT compatible with five slots and hard-disk support. The PC4 is an 80286 microprocessor-based IBM PC/AT compatible machine. It has clock speeds of either 8 or 12 Mhz, VGA-compatible video, four AT-style expansion

slots, up to one megabyte of system RAM and is ready for an 80287 numeric coprocessor.

Additionally, Atari is announcing "Moses PromiseLAN," a local area network that can connect up to 17 PCs using off-the-shelf telephone wire. They will also be developing Moses PromiseLAN adaptors for its Mega and ST computers. Thus, the Mega and Atari laser printer will be able to share data with PCs and Apple Macintoshes.

COMING NEXT UPDATE. . .

Watch for more third-party desktop publishing programs from Soft Logik, Timeworks, Migraph. . . Multiuser, Multitasking programs with the Idris operating system. . . desktop video from Antic Software. . . products galore from MichTron, Spectrum Holobyte, Word Perfect, Abacus, ISD Marketing, B.E.S.T. and lots more.

Monday, November 1, Atari announced its entrance into the serious business market with an array of multi-user, multitasking products. The Atari booth itself was crowded with exciting products, interested spectators and busy software personnel. Here's a run-down of what we saw at the Atari booth.

MULTI-USER, MULTITASKING

Along with high-quality third-party developers, Atari will offer ultiuser, multitasking and serious vertical applications on the Mega using a Unix-like operating system called Idris (developed by Whitesmiths Ltd.). The company, Computer Tools, was and still is instrumental in finding companies whose programs can be ported over from the Unix environment to Idris and porting those programs.

Jefferson Software is now releasing a version of their Modula-2 Development System for the Mega to run under Idris, offering a powerful language to complement the multi-user, multitasking operating system.

American Network's Cash Register Plus, the first of the multiuser, multitasking applications, is a point-of-sale program that lets you store and search up to 3,000 items. It supports a Star 8340 printer -- small to print out receipts -- and an actual cash drawer. It includes a customer and inventory database and backs up all information to disk. It can support four terminals with all cables attached to the Mega. This is expected to be on sale mid-January 1988 for about $700 for all the components.

During your inventory search, you may want to do some word processing. There are several word processors to choose from in this Idris environment. From the Tigera Corporation comes Word Era, a feature-rich, high-performance word processing package on single- and multiuser systems. It has a Wang-compatible interface and document conversion capabilities. Word Era has the features of leading word processing software and more, including a window environment, voice recognition and voice annotation. It can also set up menus in French, German, Italian and Spanish, and supports a four-user system. Available during the first quarter of 1988, the multiuser price begins at $895.

Another word processor is CrystalWriter Plus from Syntactics, providing a library of model documents for frequently used formats such as letters, memos and reports. An organization can define its own "style sheet" for documents. The program has "plain English" commands and can be useful for writers, editors, secretaries, managers and engineers.

Also ported from the Unix world is Lex, a combined word processor and database, from Trajectory Software. Its indexed file structure lets you retrieve the 10,000th record as quickly as the first. You can design your own forms and screen layouts, create short and more extensive glossary items, and do list processing and mail merges. It also comes with a built-in calculator which you can use concurrently as you write or edit. Also available is Lexet, which lets you interface the word processor and database with laser printers.

Atari Corp. is handling the networking capabilities through an agreement with Network Research Corp. With FUSION, Network Software will give the Atari Mega a complete set of TCP/IP protocols and allocations which have been tested for compliance with DDN/DARPA Internet Protocol specifications.

MORE DESKTOP PUBLISHING

From Timeworks comes the Timeworks Desktop Publisher ST. Retailing for $129.95 this GEM-based program will offer WYSIWYG display, over 1,200 possible type-style combinations, ability to import graphics, and laser printer

compatibility. Desktop Publisher ST will be available in the first quarter of 1988.

Soft Logik Corp. announced a new version of its desktop publishing program, Publishing Partner Professional. New features include automatic textflow around graphic images, automatic hyphenation and kerning, the ability to import documents from other word processors such as WordPerfect, First Word and Word Writer, more fonts and font manipulation. It will retail for $149.95.

From ISD Marketing comes Calamus, a page-layout and typesetting application. It allows outline fonts and vector graphics that until now could only be processed by expensive Postscript laser printers. Calamus uses these features on both the printer and screen. The screen output can be enlarged up to laser printer resolution. The program offers a spelling checker and hyphenated dictionary, object-oriented graphics, chart forms, and font editors using Bezier curves for designing or changing fonts. Calamus for the Mega will be available in December 1987 for $349.95.

MichTron offers GFA Publisher, a GEM-controlled program with full-featured text editor, automatic text flow and paging, expandable font library and an integrated driver for PostScript.

From Migraph comes the supercharged Easy Draw. And Supercharger, a companion product to Easy Draw, makes it easy to load graphics from popular paint programs. While not a desktop publishing program, these two combined products let you create newsletters, reports, brochures, etc. You can work with ASCII files, have justified and non-justified text, use onscreen grids and rulers and output to the Atari laser printer.

LET'S EMULATE

Turn your ST into a Mac with The Magic Sac Professional from Data Pacific. The Professional consists of three products: The Magic Sac Plus, the Translator One and the Magic Epson Printer Driver. The Translator One allows the existing Atari disk drive to read and write Apple Macintosh disks and convert data between Mac, ST and IBM PC diskette formats. The Professional is shipping this month with a suggested retail price of $449.95. Typical Mac programs you can run are Macpaint, Macdraw, Excel and Pagemaker.

PC-Ditto is a software-only utility which taps the power of your Atari ST to imitate an IBM PC XT. Programs you can run include Lotus 1-2-3, Enable, Sidekick, Framework and Symphony.

WORD PROCESSING -- ALIVE AND WELL

WordPerfect for the ST is out and is called by some the Cadillac of word processors. In addition to a built-in thesaurus and spell-checker, the program has math functions anc can create indexes,and tables of contents. There are also macros, merge functions and onscreen columns. The product is shipping now for about $395 list.

From Microsoft comes the long-awaited Write, marketed by Atari Corp. It handles complex business reports as well as memos and letters. It has all the standard text generation, editing and formatting features such as cut-and-paste, creating footnotes, automatic pagination, different font styles and sizes, and it works in conjunction with the Atari Laser printer.

MORE CAD PROGRAMS

Drafix, from Foresight Resources, is now on the market and drawing critical acclaim. It's identical to the 1.00 IBM PC version, supports pen plotters, and runs on color and monochrome Atari monitors.

Coming soon from Migraph is M/CADD, a professional engineering graphics design system for the Atari Mega. M/CADD outputs directly to HPGL-compatible plotters and saves in GEM format for output on 9- and 24-pin dot-matrix printers. M/CADD files can be loaded into Migraph's Easy Draw, and you can add more text and either bit-mapped or object-oriented graphics. Suggested price is $499. M/CADD should ship the end of November.

With MichTron's Master CAD, you can produce object in 2-D and 3-D using its exclusive concepts of Projection Planes. It uses pull-down menus, dialog boxes, mouse and very few keyboard commands. Expect to see this in early 1988.

DESKTOP VIDEO

From Antic Software in conjunection with Sony comes a desktop video package. Sony's low-cost 8mm video hardware and Antic's video sequencer software create professional-quality 3-D computer-graphics videotapes of up to two hours.

The Antic software controls nine functions of the Sony VCR, then adds its own special visual effects such as fades and auto assemble/editing. The 8mm video sequencing software (including custom parallel cables) will be available in January 1988 from Antic Software. The Sony video equipment is available from Sony.

MORE GRAPHIC FUN

From Neriki Computer Graphics PTY Ltd. in Australia comes the ZImagemaster, software with a hardware box to attach to your ST. Hooking up the Polaroid Palette can output DEGAS pictures as Polaroid pictures, And you can hook up a 35mm camera to the Palette. The package yields overhead transparencies and printouts. It will retail for $400.

Antic Software is also showing Spectrum 512, its 512-color paint program, which expands the ST's normally limited palette of 16 colors to 512. Spectrum 512 can load and enhance pictures from existing ST software as well as from Amiga picture files. Available now for $69.95.

Animation comes from Antic Software as well with Cyber Paint, also $69.95. It emulates the functions of a $100,000 Quantel Paintbox -- but for computer graphics instead of live video. Cyber Paint is a member of the Cyber family of desktop video products. Its many features include smooth raster tweening along any 3-D path, professional optic effects with planar rotations through 3-D space, and moviola-style cut-and-paste.

MORE BUSINESS BITS

The Informer from Regent Software is a multi-table database with presentation graphics. Easy-to-use point and click functions let you create and manipulate up to four databases at once. You can import graphics from DEGAS and NEOchrome... From SBT comes the Database Accounting Library, menu-driven with options to confirm, change or cancel entries... Hi-Tech Advisors announces Super Sales Pro, a full-featured point-of-sale inventory control software system for the ST. It will accomodate medium- to larger-sized wholesale, retail or mail order businesses. The company will provide free technical support... From Progressive Peripherals comes Superbase Personal, a relational database, and the Logistik time/project management system... B.E.S.T Inc. offers B.E.S.T. Business Management, an integrated accounting system offering general ledger. Available now, suggested retail price is $395... ISD Marketing, which brings you the well-known VIP, now has the MasterPlan financial spreadsheet featuring the GEM environment with pull-down menus, icons, scroll bars and column grabbers. It offers graphics features as well. Also from ISD is an update to STAccounts, the integrated accounting package... From Royal Software comes additional low-cost business programs such as Help Calc, templates for their E-A Calc and VIP. Coming soon will be Inventory Master for $99.95.

MIDI

Hybrid Arts was showing ADAP and ADAP 2, the digital editing system. ADAP 2 works directly with a hard disk. Also just released is Easy Score, Hybrid Arts' new scoring program.

NEW HARD DRIVE

In mid-December ICD will ship its new 100 megabyte hard disk for $1,699.

NOTE TO ANTIC ONLINE READERS: Look to upcoming issues of Antic and START for detailed information about all of the above products. Prices and release dates are listed here as they were available. Look for a wrapup Comdex report this Friday.

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Comdex Wrap-up--

San Francisco, November 6, 1987

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Comdex closed its doors today after a five-day convention that attracted more than 90,000 delegates. Exhibitors paid $27.95 per square foot to the Interface Group for space at the show, which Comdex leased from the Convention Authority for 15 cents a day per square foot.

In addition to the plethora of products at the Atari booth was a variety of items scattered throughout the Las Vegas Convention Center and various hotels.

From Quantum Microsystems Inc., (QMI) comes a low-cost graphics tablet for the ST. The "ProTablet

ST" replaces the mouse pointer device with an accurate digitizer tablet and stylus pen. It works with programs such as Drafix, Degas, Easy Draw and CAD 3D. The tablet has a working area of 12.0 x 8.0 inches and a physical dimension of 17.5 x 11.0 x 1.2 inches. It's available now and has a retail price of $395.

"ChartPak" from Abacus software lets you do business graphics on your ST. Create visual messages from raw numerical data. Use clip art or pictures from paintPro or Degas-compatible programs. It's on the market now.

"PrintMaster Plus" from Unison World lets you design banners, newsletters, letterhead and the like. You can create and edit your own work and use art from the PrintMaster Art Galleries. Use multiple graphics on a single page, use different typefaces and styles and print reverse image copies of iron-on T-shirt decals. Available now for $39.95.

From Kyocera Unison, Inc. comes the Kyocera laser printer. It prints 10 pages per minute, gives sharp text, graphics and barcode styles. It has 79 resident fonts, eight foreign language character sets, plus three flexible, user modified Dynamic fonts for typestyle creativity. It will retail for $2,895.

From Knowledgeware (distributed by Michtron) comes "Viva Presents," an interactive desktop presentation system. Through the use of a visual construction set represented by icons, the user can put together templates to create a visual storyboard for the interactive presentation he is writing.

"Interlink ST" from Intersect Software Corp. is an advanced telecommunications package. It features autodialing, automatic redialing, password protected remote access, a text editor, background downloading and more. Interlink comes free with introductory subscription packages to GEnie, Delphi, CompuServe and The Source.

Hi-Tech Expressions brings Sesame Street to your children with six preschool computer software learning games: "Big Bird's Special Delivery," "Astro Grover," "Ernie's Big Splash," "Grover's Animal Adventures," and "Pals Around Town." Only $9.95 apiece.

Programs such as "Quantum Paintbox," "Pro Sound Designer," "Pro Midi," and "Pro Drum" come to you from Eidersoft, distributed from Computer Software Services (CSS). Quantum Paintbox offers a paint program with 4096 colors. Pro-Sound Designer is a sound sampling package with 3-3- kHz sampling, record, playback, reverse, cut, copy and more. It retails for $129.95. Pro-Midi is a complete MIDI sample/sequencer for use with Pro Sound Designer and Pro Drum using samples of real drums can create complex percussion patterns. The last two products retail for $29.95.

From the Supra Corporation comes "The Supramodem 2400," a compact model that supports asynchronous operation at 300, 1200 and 2400 bps. It has an automatic answer/automatic dial, two modular phone jacks, programmable volume speaker and a one-year warranty. It is completely Hayes-compatible and retails for $179.95. Supra also has a SupraDrive FD-10, a 10MG removable floppy disk which connects to the DMA port. It retails for $895.

A popular game from a new company is "Dark Castle" from Three-Sixty, Inc. The company was founded in March 1987 by Thomas Frisina, formerly president of Accolade Software. The company will create, develop and market software for the Atari ST series.

This was a successful, busy Comdex for Atari and we at Antic Publishing look forward to covering the products from Atari and third-party developers as they become available. Look for more Comdex coverage in the February issue of the ST Resource in Antic (on sale January 1988) and the Special Issue #2 (Music and Graphics) of START, available February 1988. Individual products will be reviewed in subsequent issues. As in the two previous news stories, prices and date-to-market were provided when available.

We look forward to bringing you the most up-to-date information about the Atari world. For subscription information about Antic and START, please call 800-234-7001.

Anita Malnig, Editor

START

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